

IN THE CLAIMS

This **Listing of Claims** will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (currently amended) A memory-programmable control (SPS) for coupling to a data interface (8) of a personal computer (PC), the personal computer (PC) including a user interface (13), a memory and a control unit for function assignment (3), the SPS comprising:

~~having means for operating the inputs and outputs (9, 10) of the SPS, the means including keys (T1 through Tn) for tripping machine functions, wherein characterized in that~~ ~~the keys (T1 through Tn) are embodied as pushbuttons (T1 through Tn), which are provided in addition to the conventional user interface surface (13) of the PC, and which are each electrically connected directly to one of the SPS inputs (9), the keys (T1 through Tn) being electrically connected directly to one of the SPS inputs (9) at the same time that the personal computer (PC) is coupled to the SPS and are each electrically connected, parallel to the SPS inputs (9), to an internal bus (14) of the PC;~~

~~wherein~~ ~~from the conventional user surface (13) of the PC, one of a plurality of key levels, each with selected meanings, stored in memory in the PC, for the pushbuttons (T1 through Tn) is selectable~~ from the user interface (13) of the PC;
and

a control unit for flag assignment (4) connected directly to the SPS inputs (9) and thus to the external pushbuttons (T1 through Tn) and to the PC via the data interface (8);

wherein the ~~and in the SPS, a data-processing control unit for flag assignment (4), connected to the SPS inputs (9), is provided, which from the PC via the data interface (8) receives the information about a the-key allocation of the pushbuttons (T1 through Tn) in a the-particular key level upon selection selected and links this information with a pushbutton signal applied to an SPS input (9), and~~

wherein upon selection of any of the keys (T1 through Tn), a respective surface function (5) of the PC, stored in the memory and assigned to both the machine function and to the key's respective key allocation is tripped.

2. (cancelled)

3. (currently amended) The device as defined by claim 1, 2,

wherein characterized in that in the PC, a first data-processing first-control unit (3), connected to the pushbuttons (T1 through Tn) via the internal bus (14), is provided in the PC, which first data-processing control unit (3) receives the information about the surface functions (5) assigned to the pushbuttons (T1 through Tn) and links the information ~~it~~ with a pushbutton signal, applied to the internal bus (14), to make a starting signal for the surface functions (5) assigned to that pushbutton (T1 through Tn).

4. (currently amended) The device as defined by one of claims 1,
~~wherein characterized in that in the PC, a second data-processing second~~
control unit (6) is provided in the PC, which second data-processing control unit
(6) is connected to a screen (12) of the PC and which-receives the information
about a key label (17), corresponding to the key allocation, so that the key
allocation of the particular key level selected can be displayed on the screen (12)
of the PC by means of a key label (17).

5. (currently amended) The device as defined by claim 4,
~~wherein characterized in that the second data-processing PC-control unit (6)~~
receives status information about the pushbuttons (T1 through Tn) from the SPS
control unit for flag assignment (4) via the data interface (8); and

~~wherein that the visual display of the key label (17) of the individual~~
pushbuttons (T1 through Tn) is dependent on the status information about the
individual pushbuttons (T1 through Tn).

6. (currently amended) The device as defined by claim 4,
~~wherein characterized in that the pushbuttons (T1 through Tn) are located in~~
the vicinity of the screen (12) of the PC in such a way that a direct relationship
with the key label (17) and/or pushbutton status information on the screen (12)
can be established by the user of the device.

7. (currently amended) The device as defined by claim 4,
wherein ~~characterized in that~~ the software in the PC is embodied such that the key label (17) can be displayed in reserved areas of the screen (12) that are not coverable by other display functions.

8. (currently amended) The device as defined by claim 1,
wherein ~~characterized in that in the PC,~~ a central memory unit (1) is provided in the PC, in which for each selectable key level, one data matrix (15) is stored, and wherein ~~in which matrix~~ each of the pushbuttons (T1 through Tn) is assigned a data line containing information that is allocated in columns to different purposes, which is stored with said data matrix (15).

9. (currently amended) The device as defined by claim 8,
wherein ~~characterized in that in the PC,~~ a central control element for level control (2) is provided in the PC, which acts as a data shunt between the central memory unit (1), the first data-processing ~~PC~~ control unit embodied as a function assignment (3), the second data-processing ~~PC~~ control unit embodied as a key display (6), and the SPS-control unit for ~~embodied as a flag assignment~~ (4).

10. (currently amended) The device as defined by claim 9,
wherein ~~characterized in that~~ ~~in the data matrix (15),~~ for each pushbutton (T1 through Tn), further stores ~~has one~~ SPS function flag, corresponding to the allocation of the pushbutton (T1 through Tn) in the selected

key level, one SPS feedback flag, one piece of label information, and one PC function identification, assigned to the allocation of the pushbutton (T1 through Tn), of the surface function (5);

[[-]]and

wherein the first data-processing ~~PC-control unit for function assignment~~ (3) receives the information on PC function identification, the second data-processing ~~PC-control unit for key display~~ (6) receives the information on labeling, and the ~~SPS-control unit for flag assignment~~ (4) receives the information on SPS function flags and SPS feedback flags via the control element level control (2) from the central memory unit (1).